

Challenging the Diabetes Aesthetic

MANIFESTO

Diabetes is a widespread condition, affecting 3.9 million people in the UK. Of that, 400,000 live with type 1 diabetes – that’s close to the entire population of cities like Liverpool or Bristol.

The number of new diagnoses of type 1 diabetes is increasing by about four percent each year, and if the current trajectory continues, the number of people living with type 1 diabetes will double within 20 years.

Diabetes isn’t a new condition, either – the term was first used in Ancient Greece in 250 BC, and symptoms were identified as far back as 1550 BC in Ancient Egypt.

Despite being widely known and widespread, popular culture ignores people living with diabetes.

The images used to show diabetes are depressing and inaccurate, and the real experiences of people with diabetes are rarely represented.

At Quin, we’re calling for a change. We want to rethink how diabetes is represented. It’s time that depictions of diabetes match with the lived experience of real people with diabetes.

We’re going to debunk the diabetes aesthetic.



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OUR PRIORITIES

1. Change the way that diabetes is portrayed by brands and in the media

Diabetes affects all sorts of people from all walks of life, but unfortunately the images that accompany the topic in news, advertising, and other media overwhelmingly depict one type of person. They primarily show people who are unhealthily overweight and almost always white. Too much emphasis is placed on the visceral image of an insulin needle breaking the skin (often in the wrong place), and too little on the rest of the person's life.

The images show people suffering with diabetes, not living with diabetes.

Diabetes is a personal condition, and that should be better represented. We will call on all types of media to use more human and natural imagery around diabetes, to remove stigma, and to support the community through positive representation - and we're going to call out images that fall short.

2. Educate people to remove stereotypes

Unreflective images for diabetes stem from a lack of education about the condition and its causes. At Quin, we aim to debunk these stereotypes by separating fact from fiction and educating the public about this condition.

We vow to spread information about the realities of life with diabetes and resources to support individuals in sharing their experiences.



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OUR PRIORITIES

3. Normalise diabetes

Diabetes is a normal part of life for many people, and they deserve to have their experiences heard and understood. Quin aims to share their stories so that collectively we can work toward a better understanding of the condition.

We will seek to improve the representation of diabetes by creating a pledge, and inviting all to join it. Our pledge is to seek out, produce, and only use imagery that represents the broad and lived experiences of people with diabetes.

Quin will continue to use our platform to amplify the voices of people with diabetes. Starting this Diabetes Awareness Month, we're taking a stand - keep an eye out to learn more and find out how you can get involved.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Share this manifesto with as many people as you can.

Flag any images that you feel don't represent the real experiences of people with diabetes and tag Quin using our handle:

@quindiabetesapp

Keep your eyes peeled for exciting announcements on the Quin website and our Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

We're just getting started.

